GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3222
ANSWERED ON:06.09.2007
PRESERVATION OF TAJ MAHAL
Panda Shri Prabodh

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Taj Mahal was turning yellow;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures taken or likely to be taken by the Government to retain the original glory of the shimmering white marble of Taj Mahal?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a) to (c) Due to a high level of Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM) in the air, the white marble surface of the Taj Mahal, particularly in the niches and arches and the brackets used for supporting the balcony of minarets, acquired a somewhat yellowish appearance while those areas which receive rain do not appear yellow. The main reason for the yellowish appearance seems to be dust and dirt deposits, which do not get washed off by rain water.

These accretionary deposits over the marble are safely removed by clay pack treatment, which is non-corrosive and non-abrasive. The clay used for this treatment is chemically refined aluminium silicate, which is an inert material and has no adverse effect on the marble surface. The clay pack treatment was carried out in 2001-03 and the same is being repeated in certain areas during the current financial year.

Archaeological Survey of India's Air Pollution Laboratory at Agra is monitoring air pollution in the ambient air of Taj Mahal regularly.